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Department of State TELEGRAM

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INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK 4635
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AMCONSUL DANANG 1165
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE 2818

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 9091

SUBJECT: LOWER HO SE ELECTIONS: AN XUYEN

REF: SAIGON 6711

1. REFTEL REPORTED BASIC BIOGRAPHIC DATA ON THE 16 PERSONS WHO INITIALLY FILED FOR THE LOWER HOUSE FROM AN XUYEN. FIVE HAVE SINCE BEEN ELIMINATED. THEY ARE: VO THANH HA, UNABLE TO GET LEAVE FROM MILITARY; TRAN PHAM DUONG, UNABLE TO GET LEAVE FROM MILITARY; NGUYEN DANG LONG, WITHDREW; NGUYEN VAN LAI, WITHDREW; DUONG VAN TU, WITHDREW.

(1)

2. LEADING CANDIDATES ARE:

A. HOANG THONG, ARVN MAJOR, BORN IN NORTH VIETNAM. ONLY CATHOLIC IN RACE. HAS BVRL DAM DOI DISTRICT CHIEF AND DEPUTY PROVINCE CHIEF FOR SECURIY IN AN XUYEN, MOST RECENTLY ASSIGNED DEPUTY FOR SECURITY IN BA XUYEN. GENERALLY WELL KNOWN AND LIKED.

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B. TRAN VI DUC, ARVN LT., BUDDHIST, STUDIED AT DA LAT MILITARY ACADEMY, PREVIOUSLY RD CADRE CHIEF IN AN XUYEN. ENERGETIC, YOUNG (25), AND A GOOD SPEAKER.

C. NGUYEN KIM PHUNG, BUDDHIST, YOUNG (29) NEWCOMER TO PROVINCE. MEMBER VARIOUS SAIGON STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS. WELL EDUCATED AND A GOOD SPEAKER, HE IS SAID TO BE BACKED BY CONSIDERABLE FUNDS. VERY ACTIVE IN CAMPAIGN, USES SLOGAN "PEACE FOR THE FATHERLAND" ON LEAFLETS AND POSTERS.

D. NGUYEN VANH VINH, BUDDHIST, BORN I NORTH VIETNAM, MEDICAL DOCTOR. FOR PAST FIVE YEARS PUBLIC HEALTH CHIEF IN AN XUYEN.

3. OTHER CANDIDATES WITH SOME CHANCE:

A. LAM NGOC BINH, BUDDHIST. MEMBER, PROVINCIAL COUNCIL. SAYS EXPECTS STUDENT SUPPORT. LOST IN CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY RACE.

B. LE HUU HANH, CAO DAI. CAO DAI HAVE SOME INFLUENCE IN AN XUYEN.

C. PHAN DINH LIU, BUDDHIST, ARVN LT, SAID TO BE WEALTHY.

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D. DAM QUANG TRUONG, BUDDHIST. FORMER DEPUTY PROVINCE CHIEF FOR ADMINISTRATION.

4. EMPHASIS IN AN XUYEN CAMPAIGN ON YOUTH WITH FOUR LEADING CONTENDERS ALL UNDER 35. PHUNG IS UNKNOWN FACTOR WHO IS RUNNING SOPHISTICATED AND WELL-FINANCED CAMPAIGN. QUESTION IS WHETHER HIS YOUTH AND DYNAMISM COUPLED WITH DISCREET USE OF "PEACE" APPEAL CAN OVERCOME FACT HE IS A NEWCOMER TO THE PROVINCE. BUNKER

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